Grave desecration suspect killed by accomplices' fire

By Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Inayati police in Khairpur Tamewali tehsil claimed that the suspect who had desecrated the body of a young girl after digging her grave in Masoom locality, was killed in the firing by his own accomplices following an 'encounter'.

According to a police spokesperson, the suspect, Abdul Wahid alias Kala, a resident of Basti Sardaran, along with his three accomplices, was hiding in the ruins of Hamidabad for fear of their arrest.

He said a police party raided the place before dawn on Wednesday. On seeing the raiding party, the suspects allegedly opened fire, that was returned by the policemen.

After the firing stopped, the police found Wahid lying seriously injured, allegedly in the firing by his accomplices who fled the scene, the spokesperson claimed.

He said during the crossfire, a bullet fired by the suspects hit Head Constable Ali Raza, but he remained unhurt as he was wearing a bullet-proof jacket. He said the police called a Rescue 1122 team to the scene, which attempted to save the injured suspect's life, but he succumbed to his wounds.

The police said a case was registered against the fleeing suspects under FIR No 9/26 and search was on for them.

Police said the suspect's motive behind the desecration of the grave and the body was yet to be probed.

Cholistan jeep rally rescheduled for Feb 11

By Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: The 21stInternational Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally has been rescheduled, and now it will be held in the jurisdictions of three districts – Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar and Rahim Yar Khan -- from Feb 11 to Feb 15, 2026.

Earlier, the jeep rally was scheduled from Feb 4 to Feb 11, 2026, in the Cholistan desert.

According to the Punjab Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC)'s notification, under the revised schedule, the inaugural ceremony of the rally would be held in Bahawalpur on Feb 10, while the registration and inspection of the participating vehicles and their drivers would be carried out in Bahawalpur on Feb 11, followed by a drivers' conference.

On Feb 12, the qualifying round of the rally would be held at Dilwash Stadium near the Derawar Fort in Cholistan. The rally's first round, to be participated by both male and female drivers, would be held on Feb 13, while the race of the stock category and a cultural night would be held on Feb 14.

The second round, comprising men and women drivers, will be held on Feb 15, along with a dirt bike race. The prize-distribution ceremony would be held the same night, the notification says.

Missing minor boy found dead in drain

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A minor boy, who had allegedly been kidnapped three weeks ago, was found dead in a drain in Baghbanpura area on Wednesday.

Reports suggested that two-year-old Ameer Hussain had suddenly gone missing when he was playing in the street outside his house located at Khyzerabad of Shalimar Town.

The parents of the minor boy searched him everywhere in the locality and then alerted the police about his sudden disappearance.

The police had registered a kidnap case against unknown suspect(s) on the complaint of his father Aslam and launched further investigations.

On Wednesday, an official said some locals spotted body of the boy and informed the police. The official said the police immediately contacted the boy's family who confirmed that he was Ameer Hussain.

To a question, the police official said it was premature to say either the boy was kidnapped and murdered by someone or he drowned accidentally in the open drain of the locality. He said the police sent the body to the city morgue for postmortem examination to find out the exact cause of his death.

Agreement on seminaries' online registration

LAHORE: The Punjab home department and the Ittehad-i-Tanzimat-i-Madaris, have reached an agreement on the registration of all seminaries in the province through an online form, developed in line with the body's recommendations.

According to the agreement, all seminaries will upload their data on the mutually agreed online form to get registered with the Punjab Charity Commission. — Staff Reporter

A FOGGY view at the Lahore Railway Station in the morning. — White Star

Illegal shed collapse

Five injured during Pera demolition operation in Rahim Yar Khan

The injured 'denied treatment, MLCs' by SZMCH doctors

By Irfanul Haq

RAHIM YAR KHAN: At least five persons were injured allegedly when the thatched roof of an illegal shed's roof collapsed during a joint anti-encroachment operation conducted by the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority (Pera) and the Municipal Committee (MC) teams here on Tuesday.

The operation was being conducted to remove encroachments along the eastern bank of Nowshera Minior Canal adjacent to Umar Block of Abbasia Town.

According to the shopkeepers, the operation was conducted without issuing any notices to them.

Yaseen, an affected shopkeeper, told Dawn that on Tuesday around 11am teams of Pera and MC staffers arrived there and told them to vacate the 20 foot land in front of the shops, where illegal sheds were built, till the evening.

Meanwhile, Pera staff also fined Rs5,000 to 6,000 to some shopkeepers and left the scene, he said.

However, he said that after only two hours, the Pera and MC staff returned there along with heavy machinery and started demolishing the temporary structures built in front of the shops.

Yaseen alleged that although many shopkeepers were removing the sheds voluntarily, Pera and MC employees started demolishing the structures.

As they demolished the roof of a shed, where some persons were still present, the structure collapsed, leaving five persons, including Gulfam (18), Ali (20), Qammar Sultan (21) and two others, including a carpenter, injured.

They were immediately shifted to the emergency ward of the Sheikh Zayed Medical College Hospital (SZMCH).

Yaseen also alleged that due to the pressure of Pera officials, doctors at the emergency ward refused to admit the injured persons.

He said that later some lawyers reached the hospital and demanded medico-legal certificates (MLCs) of the injured persons from the doctors, who refused to issue the same.

The injured, he said, were then taken to a private health facility for treatment.

Another shopkeeper, seeking anonymity, said Pera staff demanded bribe from them for sparing their shops during the operation.

SZMCH spokesperson and Deputy Medical Superintendent (DMS) Rana Ilyas Ahmed told Dawn that some lawyers filed an application on Tuesday night against the RYK deputy commissioner (DC), holding the officer responsible for the roof collapse incident. He claimed that as the lawyers were trying to wrongly implicate the DC, their application for the MCL was not entertained.

However, later in the night a board was constituted which conducted the examination of theinjured persons for issuance of the MLCs, and its report would be finalised in a couple ofdays, Mr Ahmed said.

When this correspondent tried to contact Pera office for its stance on the landline number, the phone operator said the sub divisional officer was in a meeting at the DC Office, and even refused to share his mobile phone number.

MC administrator Additional Deputy Commissioner General Irfan Anwar did not respond to the calls made on his phone for his version.

Three burnt alive in two fire incidents

By Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Three people, including an elderly couple, were burnt alive while a minor girl suffered serious burns in electric heater and gas stove fire incidents in Hasilpur and Khanqah Sharif on Wednesday.

According to emergency rescue service 1122, in the first fire incident in a house near special education school in Hasilpur, an elderly couple slept leaving the electric heater on. During night time, their quilts accidentally caught fire from the heater as a result Falak Shair (88) and his wife Gama Mai (90) were suffocated to death. Police reached the scene and declared their deaths accidental.

In the second incident at Khanqah Sharif town on Bahawalpur-Ahmedpur East highway, about 20 kms from here, the rescuers said the fire erupted in a motor mechanic's shop in local main bazaar where mechanic Shabir Ahmed (50) died of burns. The rescuers quoting deceased's nephew said the fire in the shop erupted from an electric heater, which had been switched on by the deceased to beat the shivering cold at night. Rescuers on an emergency call extinguished the fire but by then Shabir Ahmed had been burnt to death.

In the incident in Maqbool Colony near Satellite Town, an 11-year old girl Dua Fatima suffered burns when her clothes caught fire while she was sitting near a gas stove in her house. The rescuers, who rendered her first aid at her house, shifted her to Bahawal Victoria Hospital (BVH) where doctors said her legs had suffered burns and she was admitted for treatment.

ACCIDENT: A loader rickshaw driver, Sajjad, was killed when his shawl got entangled in the chain of the three-wheeler which overturned near local ghee mills on Bahawalpur-Ahmedpur East highway on Wednesday. The deceased's companion, Wazir (20), suffered injuries and was shifted to BVH.

Rare 'fetus in fetu' surgery at SZMCH

RAHIM YAR KHAN: A 5-year-old child underwent a `successful' surgery to remove partially-formed fetus from his chest in Sheikh Zayed Medical College Hospital (SZMCH).

The complex surgery was performed on Monday (Jan 12) by pulmonologist Dr Sultan Owaisi, Head of the Tharocic Surgery Department SZMCH, who said the fetus was located near the main artery of the heart.Dr Owaisi elaborated that this was a case of `fetus in feto', a rare condition in which a partially-formed twin develops inside the body of a child.

"In most such cases, the fetus is found in the abdomen, making this case unique because it was located in the chest," he added.

According to a press release of the Sheikh Zayed Medical College Hospital on Wednesday, several organs of the fetus (weighing around one kg) had developed except the head.

The boy's condition remained unresolved as he had long-standing history of cough and shortness of breath on exertion, attributed by some medics as early childhood recurrent respiratory symptoms.

Dr Owaisi said the child had been experiencing breathing difficulties, chest infection, persistent cough, and fever since he was 18 days old.

Coming from rural area, his parents consulted multiple doctors over the months. However, the the CT scan at the SZMCH diagnosed the presence of fetus in feto.

He said the boy was now healthy -- eating, moving, and showing normal activity. He hoped Rehan would be discharged from the hospital in a couple of days. According to BBC Urdu, it is a rare case occuring in one out of 500,000 live births.

— IRFANUL HAQ

Measures to retrieve state land reviewed

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A high-level meeting between the officials of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Punjab government officers was held at NAB's provincial headquarters on Wednesday to review measures for retrieval of illegally occupied state land across Punjab.

The meeting assessed the progress achieved to date in this regard and deliberated upon the future strategy.

The meeting was jointly presided by NAB Deputy Chairman Sohail Nasir and Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman.

Board of Revenue Senior Member Nabeel Javed, NAB PGA Ehtisham Qadir, NAB Lahore DG Mirza Faran Baig, Punjab Advocate General Amjad Pervaiz and commissioners of different districts were also present in the meeting.

Dekho Film Festival opens at Alhamra

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The two-day Dekho Film Festival began with great enthusiasm on Wednesday at the Lahore Arts Council, Alhamra, The Mall, featuring thought-provoking speeches by film industry luminaries, film screenings and music performances.

Organised jointly by Alhamra and the Department of Film and Broadcasting, the University of the Punjab, the festival is a celebration of cinema, youth creativity and meaningful cultural discourse.

The opening ceremony was attended by eminent personalities, including film director Syed Noor, Punjab University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Ali Shah, film director Rafiq Shehzad, playwright Amna Mufti and senior producer Safdar Malik.

In her opening remarks, Lubna Zaheer from the PU Department of Film and Broadcasting welcomed the guests and warmly acknowledged the support and cooperation extended by Alhamra Executive Director Muhammad Nawaz Gondal, in making the festival possible.

Speaking on the occasion, filmmaker Syed Noor announced his full support for the emerging talent, besides a cash award of Rs200,000 for the future winner of the festival. He said that such festivals are essential for nurturing the younger generation.

Executive Director Mr Gondal stated that the festival would serve as a strong foundation for polishing and promoting young talent, reinforcing Alhamra's commitment to empowering young creative minds and strengthening Pakistan's cinematic future.

VC Dr Shah appreciated Syed Noor's initiative and announced that the award would be named after the seasoned filmmaker. He highlighted the need for such constructive efforts and praised Dr Lubna and her team for their dedication and vision.

Amna Mufti advised the young participants to always stand for truth, stating that writing carries a timeless impact and leaves impressions that resonate across generations.

Pakistan Film Producers Association chairman and film director Rafiq Shehzad remarked that investing in the youth is, in fact, an investment in the nation's future.

On the first day of the festival, music performances and a special session on Pakistani cinema were also held, where participants were informed about the journey of the national film industry. The session highlighted that Pakistani cinema began its journey in 1948 with "Teri Yaad," reached its golden era in the 1960s and 1970s, and is now entering a new phase, marked by fresh narratives and renewed creative energy.

Film screenings on the first day drew a large audience and received an encouraging response. It was shared that more than 150 films were submitted for the festival's competitive segment, of which 30 were selected for screening. Film screenings will continue on the festival's second and concluding day, followed by a Mushaira.